THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

Relations with Kuwait

1659. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item captioned "Delay in cementing ties with Kuwait costs India dear" in Financial Express dated 17th February, 1992.

(b) if so, what steps are being taken for smoother relations with Kuwait;

(c) what was the result of the talks recently held in Kuwait at ministerial level;

(d) wheher any break through has been achieved in increasing workers participation in Kuwait; and

(e) the number of Indians in Kuwait as on 31st January, 1992?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) During the recent visit to Kuwait by the External Affairs Minister on February 15 and 16, 1992, both sides agreed to strengthen and deepen their bilateral relations. They signed an agreement to form a Joint Commission at a Ministerial level, send a high level delegation to India for trade, commerce, investment, defence etc. The two sides also agreed to facilitate the recruitment of workers from India.

(e) the number of Indians in Kuwait as on 31st January, 1992 is estimated to be 75,000.

Omission of Jammu and Kashmir as integral part of India by Foreign Airlines in their maps

1660. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most European Airlines are not showing Jammu and Kashmir as part of India in their maps;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) Most European Airlines depict only general physical featuers and not precise political boundaries in their maks?

(c) Whenever maps in foreign publications which incorrectly depict India's external boundaries come to Government's notice, the matter is taken up with the publisher and/or the concerned Government.

Supply of Passports

1661. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some move to accept the passport fee either in cash or in bank draft in future is under consideration;

(b) if so, the details thereof with objectives behind this;

(c) whether some move to authorise recognised travel agents to attest photographs and other supporting documents of applicants seeking passports is also under Government's consideration;

(d) if so, the details thereof with objectives behind this;

(e) whether Government also propose to take some steps to ensure that passports are issued to people within stipulated time schedule of